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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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State Department review
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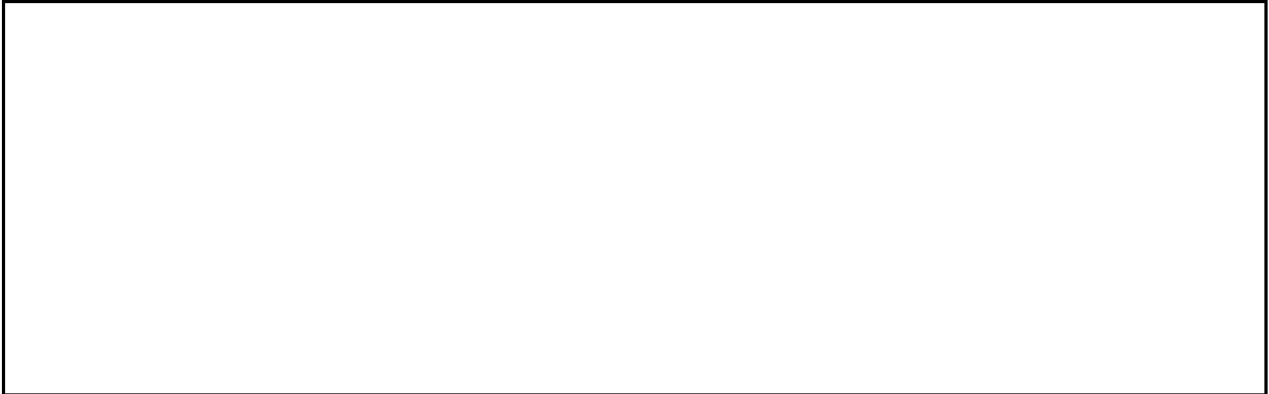
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SOUTHEAST ASIA

3. French position in northwestern Tonkin precarious:

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The French military position in northwestern Tonkin is "very serious," [redacted]

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[redacted] it is doubtful that Na San can be held, and overland withdrawal for the approximately 10,000 French troops there would be very difficult, if not impossible. Attempts at air evacuation may eventually be necessary, but French air transport is already strained.

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[redacted] the loss of northwestern Tonkin and a substantial number of French troops might open the way for a Viet Minh drive into Laos.

Comment: French forces in northwestern Tonkin are concentrated in two sectors, Lai Chau and Na San, with five and twelve battalions respectively. Viet Minh forces are now threatening Lai Chau with two regiments from the south and Na San with two regiments from the north and two from the south (see map, p. 5).

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In the past, the Viet Minh has not been successful in overrunning well-entrenched French Union troops with intact lines of supply. Since Lai Chau and Na San are supplied solely by air, favorable weather is of primary importance.

The effort in the northwest is a constant drain on French resources in the delta, and protracted military action outside the French defense perimeter invites additional Viet Minh infiltration of the delta while disrupting French clearing action there.

4. Central authority in Indonesia seen waning:

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Central authority in Indonesia appears to be ebbing, according to the American Embassy in Djakarta. While there is general agreement that President Sukarno is irreplaceable, there is much uneasiness in Djakarta over his failure to take decisive action in the face of the split within the army.

The Embassy notes that even if the government succeeds in bringing the military organization back under its control, the precedent of military insubordination and interference in civil affairs has been set.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5. Anglo-Egyptian talks on the Sudan almost deadlocked:

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Anglo-Egyptian negotiations in Cairo have not progressed on the question of the treatment of the southern Sudan, according to

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Ambassador Caffery. Great Britain is insisting that the Governor General of the Sudan have special powers in this region which cannot be modified by the Egyptian-proposed advisory commission.

The Egyptian representative warns that placing the southern Sudan in a special category would cause the two major Sudanese parties, which recently reached agreement with Egypt, to boycott the elections.

Comment: In spite of some initial British optimism over the Egyptian proposals for the future of the Sudan, point-by-point negotiations on the draft constitution have been discouraging.

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WESTERN EUROPE

7. Adenauer dissatisfied with progress on European defense:

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At a meeting with the Allied High Commissioners in Bonn on 25 November, Chancellor Adenauer repeatedly criticized the French on the questions of ratification of the Bonn and Paris treaties, the development of defense, and the Saar issue. He wants, however, to have "reasonable" French-German discussions on the Saar after the 30 November elections.

Adenauer referred to the "general paralysis in Europe" which, he said, meant that the Bonn and Paris treaties could not go into effect until sometime next summer, and that concrete military achievements would be delayed into the distant future.

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